

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2005**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

John R. Byers, Mount Vernon District
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Rodney Lusk, Lee District
Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District
James R. Hart, At-Large

OTHERS PRESENT:

Barbara J. Lipa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Sara R. Hardy, Assistant Director, Planning Commission Office
Susan M. Donovan, Deputy Clerk, Planning Commission Office
Norma J. Duncan, Associate Clerk, Planning Commission Office
David S. Jillson, Planner III, Facilities Planning Branch, Planning Divisions (PD)
Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)
David Marshall, Assistant Director, PD, DPZ
Neil McBride, Citizen Activist, Mount Vernon District
Carey F. Needham, Chief, Building Design Branch, Planning and Design Division
(PDD), Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)

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Vice-Chairman John R. Byers constituted the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Conference Room, pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*. He asked for a motion to elect the 2005 Chairman.

Commissioner Murphy MOVED TO ELECT RODNEY L. LUSK AS CHAIRMAN FOR 2005. It was seconded by Commissioner de la Fe and approved unanimously.

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Chairman Lusk noted that the Committee would discuss the proposed FY 2006-FY 2010 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and seek clarification on any items that had been raised at the March 10th workshop. He asked for questions or recommendations from Committee members.

Commissioner de la Fe mentioned that he had no recommendations on current items but wished to address an item from the Pedestrian Task Force later in the meeting.

Commissioner Murphy indicated his appreciation to County staff involved in preparation of the CIP, as he thought the workshop went extremely well due to their effort. He also noted that all Agency speakers had kept within the timeframe allotted. He then asked Barbara Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office, to prepare letters of appreciation for his signature to all staff participants.

Chairman Lusk raised a point in the Housing section regarding workforce housing. He noted the amount of \$2M had been recommended for affordable/workforce housing initiatives as proposed by the Affordable Housing Preservation Task Force. He indicated his belief that \$2M was too little to address the issue. He stated that if it were to be worthwhile, there should be at least \$4M or \$5M designated. With such an amount, he indicated his belief that Housing might partner with private or public entities to leverage existing funds.

Commissioner de la Fe agreed but stated that amounts presented by Chairman Lusk were still too modest and that the Housing Task Force had actually recommended a set-aside of one penny of the tax rate which would equal approximately \$18M. He also stated his opinion that the Planning Commission recommendation should concur with the Housing Preservation Task Force recommendation on the set aside for affordable housing.

Chairman Lusk contended that when the Task Force made its recommendation, they were thinking more that the penny was going to be dedicated to the preservation of housing, not necessarily workforce housing. He noted there was an effort to define affordable housing and indicated there were two ways to view it: (1) housing for those who were employed in corporations, who could not afford to live in the area, and (2) housing for those on public assistance, who were unable for some reason to acquire housing. He said he wanted to separate workforce housing even from that penny recommendation.

Commissioner de la Fe noted that he understood the separation and was agreeable.

Commissioner Murphy questioned whether the amount would have to be readjusted if approved, or whether they would have to take it from one area to pay another. Mr. Marshall admitted he was not knowledgeable about that line item but felt it would not be a problem since it was shown as part of the General Fund on the documents provided. He indicated that he would return to the Commission at markup with an answer.

Commissioner Hart noted that the same amount of \$2M was in Item 11 on the chart following the text and expressed concern about the color-coding to show changes. Mr. Jillson said it was a late addition to the program and they were waiting to see if it became an actual project rather than a study and would later change it to blue, based on what the project would entail.

Mr. Marshall noted that it appeared to be intended for a feasibility or design study to scope the project, which would not require a lot of funding, so the money should be used for implementation. He recommended researching the project for the best approach. Commissioner de la Fe added that budget charts generally get adjusted after decisions so there was no need to be concerned at that point.

Commissioner Byers stated that the project was a laudable objective but was concerned that funds might not accomplish their goal. Chairman Lusk replied that the Department of Housing and Community Development was tasked to review the recommendations from the Housing Preservation Task Force and develop an implementation plan to accomplish the task.

Chairman Lusk restated his intention to establish a connection between the \$4 - \$5M requested and a provision for workforce housing. He acknowledged that the implementation would have to be discussed with Housing but stated his goal was to separate affordable housing from workforce housing and dedicate funds specifically for workforce housing.

Commissioner Lawrence said that although land-use and property rights differed throughout the world, the same types of problems were encountered and that, to save time, the County staff might seriously look outside the United States to explore solutions already utilized and see if it was felt that they could be adapted here to formulate County programs.

Chairman Lusk inquired whether there was a way to transmit to Housing the intent of the Commission to allocate funds for workforce housing and get feedback prior to markup. Mr. Marshall suggested meeting with HCD staff before CIP Markup or even have them help sponsor the project. He reiterated that he viewed the \$2M as seed money for a feasibility study and that it was more important to dedicate the majority of funds for implementation in later years beyond the current year. He speculated that there should possibly be two line items since that seemed to be what the Commission was implying. Commissioner Lawrence agreed that there should be a distinction.

Chairman Lusk asserted that he and Commissioner de la Fe were in agreement to support the penny for affordable housing, and as a substantive act, workforce housing should get its own dedicated funding amount.

Commissioner de la Fe commented that the project was one of a few cases where providing additional funds actually allowed you to spend the money when opportunities were presented. He noted that some condominium conversions were surfacing in the Hunter Mill District, for example, and if there was funding, the County could purchase them.

Chairman Lusk asked for other items for discussion. When there was no response, he called on Commissioner de la Fe to present his item from the Pedestrian Task Force.

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Commissioner de la Fe noted that the Pedestrian Task Force had been charged with providing recommendations and a 10-year plan on pedestrian funding and programs. They had decided, he said, that since they were doing a 10-year plan, they would submit their report and conclude their mission. He said they had developed a project template in the form of a pie chart which displayed pedestrian-oriented activities, as a way to divide what funds were given, with the majority going to large activity centers.

Commissioner de la Fe discussed the features of the document (copy included in file) describing what funds were requested for each category. He said the task force recommended \$6M a year and he suggested that the Planning Commission ask the Board of Supervisors to be cognizant of the Pedestrian Task Force recommendations as it considered the CIP and County Budget.

There followed a discussion of whether the Pedestrian Task Force recommendations should be made as a separate motion or contained within the umbrella of one motion.

Commissioner Murphy indicated that the format in previous years had been that the Chairman of the Capital Improvements Program would make an “omnibus” motion and then accept any amendments. He advised asking members of the Commission to present any amendments by a certain date so staff could relay copies to them before the CIP Markup. He indicated that Commissioner de la Fe’s motion should be considered a secondary motion.

Mr. Marshall acknowledged that it had been done that way in the past. Commissioner Murphy said he was open to suggestions but believed that it was good to have established deadlines. He asked Ms. Lippa to solicit responses from the Planning Commission on any proposed changes.

Chairman Lusk reminded them that logistically, there was a timing problem since the markup was scheduled next week, but suggested that they accept emails by close of business on Monday, distribute any changes on Tuesday, and be prepared for the markup on Wednesday.

Commissioner Murphy recommended that Mr. Marshall speak with the RHA and forward their input to the Planning Commission as well.

Chairman Lusk asked for other items for consideration. Commissioner Byers asked about the packages received the previous night from attending agencies and whether that information was already included in the advertised CIP. Mr. Marshall responded that the packages were only highlights as presented by agencies during the workshop. He mentioned that the Park Authority went a little more into other program areas but that it was not in conflict with the CIP.

Commissioner de la Fe asked how much the School Board would ask for in the bond package this year. Mr. Marshall replied that the exact dollar amount was established around June. Mr. Jillson mentioned that he had tried to get that information last week but was unsuccessful. Commissioner de la Fe said he wanted to be sure what the figure included since they had worked so hard to get land.

Chairman Lusk asked staff where the General District Court’s request for furniture, wall fabric and other improvements were included in the CIP. Mr. Needham explained that he had spoken with both Facilities Management and Management and Budget about those issues. He said the loose furnishings were not CIP elements but were funded for repair or replacement from agency operational budgets, and this had been discussed between the courts and DMB. He said existing courtroom issues were identified as CIP projects in the long-term section and that FMD was currently working on lighting with limited funds. He said there was an IT study in progress to determine the funding effort required for upgrading the courtrooms but it would be in competition with other County projects.

In answer to a question from Chairman Lusk, Mr. Needham stated that long-term meant “beyond five years.” He added that there was no real funding mechanism identified to handle that and it had not been elevated to a priority item since they were still spending the \$115M to renovate the common areas such as the central mechanical and electrical systems along with a major addition to the courthouse. He said they knew that the courtrooms were not part of that project. Chairman Lusk remarked that it seemed like a disparity to have new construction within the judicial center and to have this older courtroom without funding.

Commissioner Byers pointed out that the item on page 102, Jennings Judicial Center, at the end of the paragraph, referenced \$4M for loose furniture and \$3.5M for systems furniture, all from the General Fund. Mr. Needham responded that the loose furniture and systems furniture was for the new expansion and included renovations in some common areas and that the major renovation in the existing courthouse excluded the interior of the courtrooms. He added that the heating and cooling system was a major renovation funded for over \$115M to replace all units.

Mr. Needham noted that further improvements would be possible with funding to modify how the distribution lines moved air into the courtrooms, but current improvements would not provide a complete facelift without dedicated funding.

In answer to Commissioner de la Fe’s question on the \$4M shown in the out-years for the Animal Shelter, Mr. Marshall indicated that the figure was entered as a placeholder but there was \$75K to scope the project to determine real costs. He said it would be included in the Public Safety Bond Referenda planned for the Fall of 2006. Mr. Needham concurred that it was earmarked as a top candidate for that timeframe.

Mr. Marshall stated his staff would welcome input from the Committee on any suggestions or comments on the overall process or format regarding the CIP.

There being no additional items, Chairman Lusk MOVED TO ADJOURN, and the committee concurred unanimously.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.
Rodney Lusk, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available at the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Norma Duncan

Approved: June 15, 2005

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission